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Subject: Federal Highway Economic Stimulus Funding

Importance: High

To: Iowa Metropolitan Planning Organizations
and Regional Planning Affiliations

Date: February 18, 2009

From: Stuart Anderson, Director
Planning, Programming and Modal Division
Iowa Department of Transportation

Subject: Federal Highway Economic Stimulus Funding

Yesterday afternoon, President Obama signed the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 which includes appropriations for highways. We've attached a draft summary of the transportation provisions of the act for your information. The purpose of this e-mail is to inform you of the next steps to implement the highway funding provisions of the act.

RPA/MPO Stimulus Funding Level

Iowa's share of federal highway stimulus funding is approximately \$358.2 million. Of that amount, three percent must be spent for transportation enhancement projects (approximately \$10.7 million), 30 percent must be allocated to areas based on population per STP distribution requirements (approximately \$107.5 million), and the remaining 67 percent is for use at the state's discretion (approximately \$240 million).

Consistent with the distribution of federal-aid in Iowa, our original plan was to distribute one-third of the federal highway stimulus funding to RPAs and MPOs and the remaining two-thirds would remain with the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT). This would result in \$119.4

million allocated to RPAs and MPOs and \$238.8 million to the Iowa DOT. Because this methodology exceeds the minimum requirements of the act, we will continue to utilize this methodology for distributing federal highway stimulus funding. However, in order to minimize the changes that you need to make in selecting local stimulus projects, we will round up the RPA/MPO federal highway stimulus funding level to \$120 million so that your targets remain identical to those you were provided initially. We have attached those targets to this e-mail for your reference.

Transportation Enhancement Funding Requirement

In order to meet the transportation enhancement funding requirement, Iowa DOT will identify the total amount of local stimulus projects that are transportation enhancement eligible and then compare that with the minimum amount required by the act. The Iowa DOT will identify at least enough trail projects, from those submitted per our earlier request, to meet the requirements of the act. Trail projects identified by the Iowa DOT and approved by the Transportation Commission will come from the Iowa DOT's share of federal highway stimulus funding.

RPA/MPO Project Selection

For practical purposes, the act eliminates the requirement for local projects to meet the initial deadline of obligating at least 50 percent of their funds within 120 days. Therefore, the one requirement is that all of the RPA/MPO federal highway stimulus funds be obligated (authorized) within one year of fund apportionment. Because this is a less restrictive deadline than you initially prepared for, you will be allowed to revisit your list of projects. However, we encourage you to stick with your initial list or to make very few changes. While the deadlines are less restrictive we must still keep in mind that the intent of the act is to inject funding into the economy as soon as possible. In addition, we want to assure that no projects are selected that cannot easily meet the deadlines. If we do not meet the deadlines, we will lose funding. With this in mind, Iowa DOT is not changing its list of projects.

Final Approval

Based on the information provided in this e-mail, we now ask that you finalize your project lists and seek policy board approval as soon as possible. Per our earlier e-mail, we also ask that the MPO's include the DOT stimulus projects in their TIP amendment approval.

Please submit your final project lists by the end of the day Monday, March 2nd, to Shawn Majors at shawn.majors@dot.iowa.gov. You may also contact Shawn at 515-239-1288 if you have any questions or require additional information.

Attachments

cc: Counties
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